CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MARKETING, CUSTOMER BONDING, AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

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ABSTRACT: The telecommunications industry is one of the most competitive industries with high penetration of digital technology, faster availability of data services, and innovations in telecommunications. The purpose of the present study is to empirically test a model that illustrates how customer relationship marketing (CRM) and customer bonding (CBD) affect customer loyalty (CLA) with customer satisfaction (CSA) as a mediating variable in the telecommunication company. A survey of the telecommunication customers was conducted with responses from 230 samples by maximizing the Partial-Least-Square Structural-Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The research results show that CRM and CBD are inferred to impact CLA and mediate CSA significantly. Compared to CRM, CBD has emerged as the most influential determinant of the proposed model. Marketing managers can adopt relevant business strategies and promote customer relationship marketing and customer bonding to achieve customer loyalty.

Keywords: Customer Relationship Marketing; Customer Bonding; Customer Satisfaction; Customer Loyalty

INTRODUCTION

The telecommunications industry is one of the most competitive industries (Carpenter & Luciano, 2021). The penetration of digital technology, faster availability of data services, and innovations in telecommunications have transformed faster communication methods (Abd-Elrahman et al., 2019). Telecommunications technology continues to develop rapidly, so customers tend to switch to providers that offer newer technology or services or more advanced features. The high level of competition with similar product and service offerings means that customers have many choices. The level of competition for telecommunications operators are also intense in Indonesia, especially Telkomsel, XL and Indosat. Based on the number of 4G BTS, Telkomsel has the largest number, 187,408 BTS, Indosat as of 68,759 BTS, and XL Axiata by 65,658 BTS (Kata Data, 2021). Telkomsel has 169.1 million subscribers, followed by Indosat 60.3 million, then XL Axiata 56.7 million (Kata Data, 2021). Many telecommunications customers are very sensitive to changes in tariffs or packages. As soon as the company changes the price or package, it can affect customer loyalty (CLA), especially if the change is not communicated or explained properly. Even if service to customers has decreased, this condition is the main reason for customers to leave the telecommunications provider (Abd-Elrahman et al., 2020; Smith, 2022). The challenge of retaining high quality customers is one of the main issues.

Customer preferences that are constantly changing add to the complexity of the problem of CLA for telecommunications companies (Abd-Elrahman, 2023). Consumers have needs or desires that are constantly evolving and changing. Various features or options available to consumers require telecommunications companies to work hard to acquire and retain customers. These conditions resulted in aspects of customer satisfaction and CLA being key constructs that are relevant to success in the telecommunications industry (Abd-Elrahman et al., 2019).

Consumer satisfaction refers to customer perceptions about the extent to which a company's product or service meets or even exceeds consumer expectations (Ahmed et al., 2023; El Moussaoui et al., 2023; Maupa et al., 2023; Tseng et al., 2022; J. A. Zhang et al., 2022). Once consumers are satisfied with a product or service, they are more likely to buy it again in the future and recommend it to others (Sulaiman et al., 2017). High consumer satisfaction can affect brand image, increase customer retention, and reduce the rate of complaints or service outages. The problem of consumer dissatisfaction with telecommunication services such as poor signal quality or frequent interruptions is one of the main customer complaints in the telecommunication industry. The customer experiences delays or interruptions in service, such as slow or intermittent internet connection. Tariffs and fees in the telecommunications industry are often complex, and there are often hidden costs that leave customers dissatisfied (Abd-Elrahman, 2023).

Customer loyalty (CLA) is the tendency of consumers to continue buying products or services from the same company (Kwon & Ahn, 2022). If consumers

are loyal to a company, they are more likely to remain customers, even if other companies offer cheaper or better products or services (Zhang et al., 2022). CLA refers to the customer's attachment and intention to continue using a product or service from a company in the long term (Tegambwage & Kasoga, 2022). In the telecommunication industry, loyal customers tend to choose to subscribe to certain providers, even in the midst of intense competition. CLA has an impact not only on recurring revenue, but also on promotions through positive experiences that customers share with others (Kwon & Ahn, 2022).

Although the importance of CSA and CLA is recognized in the telecommunications industry, there is still a lack of comprehensive research to describe the relationship between these two variables. Previous research has often been specific to certain aspects or limited to a small geographic area. Therefore, there is a need to conduct broader and in-depth research to close the gap from previous research and understand how customer satisfaction directly or indirectly affects CLA in the increasingly complex and dynamic context of the telecommunications industry.

In the telecommunications industry, various factors that can contribute to the level of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are customer relationship marketing (Bapat & Khandelwal, 2023; Negi & Ketema, 2013) and customer bonding (Ahn, 2022; Boateng et al., 2020; Marmat, 2022). Empowering customers and building strong relationships with them is essential to a company's long-term success. Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) has become a recognized and implemented approach by telecommunications companies to understand, fulfil and maintain customer needs and wants (Fazal-e-Hasan et al., 2020). CRM as a strategic approach that focuses on deep understanding of customers and ongoing interactions involving the use of data and technology to identify customer preferences, personalize communications and services, and build strong bonds with customers (Banerjee & Sreejesh, 2022). In the telecommunications industry, CRM implementation can help companies deliver more relevant and effective services, improve customer retention and reduce churn rates.

Customer bonding (CBD) refers to the degree of emotional bond or connection between a customer and a brand, which creates strong customer loyalty and commitment to the company (Balci et al., 2019; Milan et al., 2018; Potdar et al., 2018). CBD involves creating positive experiences, meeting customer needs consistently, and actively working to build sustainable relationships. Engaged customers tend to be more loyal, more likely to promote the brand to others, and more tolerant of price changes or competition (Milan et al., 2018).

CRM and CBD can help telecommunications companies to increase customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and sales. CRM and CBD can also help telecommunications companies to reduce costs and increase profitability (Balci et al., 2019). Several benefits can be obtained by telecommunications companies by implementing CRM and CBD, especially in the aspects of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, sales, costs, and profitability. CRM and CBD are two very important marketing strategies for telecommunications companies. By

implementing CRM and CBD, telecommunications companies can build strong and lasting relationships with customers, which in turn can increase customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, sales, and profitability.

There is still a research gap that needs to be filled regarding the importance of CRM and CBD relationships in the telecommunications industry. Some previous studies have been too general or unspecific in detailing the factors that most influence CBD in this industrial. The main objective of this study is to analyse the relationship between CRM and CBD on CLA through the mediation of customer satisfaction in the telecommunication industry. This research will identify the constructs that contribute most to CSA and CLA. Thus, this study provides deeper insight into how CRM, CBD, CSA and CLA are interrelated in the telecommunication industry.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Customer Relationship Marketing and Customer Satisfaction

Personalization efforts, such as tailoring product recommendations, content and communications to each customer, have a significant impact on CSA (De et al., 2021). Personalized experiences make customers feel valued and understood. Communication is an important element of CRM. (Dandis et al., 2023) studies show that clear and timely communication with customers, including responding to inquiries and dealing with problems promptly, positively influences satisfaction levels. Customers value feeling heard and having their concerns addressed. The use of customer data and analytics to gain insight into customer behaviour and preferences is at the heart of CRM. (Dandis, et al., 2022) research shows that companies that effectively use data-driven insights to improve their products and services tend to have higher CSA ratings.

Consistency in customer support across multiple touchpoints (phone, email, social media) is essential. (Dah et al., 2023) studies show that customers who receive consistent and reliable support are more likely to report higher satisfaction with the company. CRM systems often include a feedback mechanism that allows customers to provide feedback and suggestions. (Kittur & Chatterjee, 2021) research shows that customers value these feedback opportunities and that companies that actively use customer feedback to improve their offerings tend to have higher satisfaction scores.

Several studies have shown that the loyalty and rewards programs offered as part of a CRM initiative can positively influence CSA. Customers often appreciate the tangible benefits they receive through such programs. Trust is a fundamental element of any successful customer relationship. (Sharma, 2022) research emphasizes that companies must be transparent in their dealings with customers, especially regarding data privacy and security. Trust leads to higher CSA. CRM strategies that aim to create an emotional connection with customers tend to be more successful in increasing satisfaction. Emotional engagement fosters deeper and more loyal customer relationships (Sulaiman, 2022).

According to (Juusola et al., 2023), CRM has proven to be a very influential business management strategy and a powerful business management technology solution, with a very relevant impact in the field of entrepreneurship. To achieve the expected benefits of relationship marketing, CRM is the main tool that seeks CSA with every relationship through an emphasis on customer service. (Leung et al., 2022) studies have shown that CSA is positively correlated with CLA. Therefore, it can be concluded that by adopting a customer relationship marketing strategy, businesses can increase CSA and increase CLA for hypothesis formulation.

H1: CRM is inferred to have significant impact on CSA

Customer Relationship Marketing and Customer Loyalty

CRM is a strategic approach that emphasizes building strong, long-term relationships with customers. It involves collecting and analysing customer data to understand their needs and preferences, personalizing interactions, and providing excellent customer service. Personalized marketing and communication efforts, tailored to individual customer preferences and behaviours, significantly contribute to building CLA (Juusola et al., 2023). Customers appreciate brands that "know" them and offer relevant products or services.

Studies (Mittal & Maity, 2022) indicate that a superior customer experience, facilitated by CRM initiatives, leads to higher levels of CLA. This includes delivering consistent, high-quality service across all touchpoints and providing prompt problem resolution. Companies that effectively use customer data and analytics to gain insights into customer behaviour and preferences tend to have more loyal customer bases. Data-driven decision-making improves the relevance of products, services, and marketing campaigns (Abdur Rehman et al., 2019).

Maintaining open, two-way communication with customers is crucial. Research (Sharma, 2022) suggests that companies that actively engage with customers, seek their feedback, and respond to their needs are more likely to build loyal relationships. Many studies emphasize the positive impact of loyalty programs and rewards offered as part of CRM initiatives. These programs incentivize repeat business and increase customer retention (Garepasha et al., 2021).

Research underscores the importance of trust-building efforts, including data privacy and security, in developing lasting customer relationships (Osman et al., 2022). Brands that focus on creating emotional connections with customers tend to generate higher levels of loyalty. Emotional engagement can lead to a stronger bond and long-term commitment. CSA often serves as a precursor to loyalty. Satisfied customers are more likely to become loyal customers while CRM efforts are consistent in meeting or exceeding their expectations.

CRM that emphasizes personalization, enhanced customer experiences, data-driven insights, communication, engagement, trust-building, emotional connections, and rewards programs tend to foster greater CLA. Businesses that prioritize CRM as a key strategy are more likely to enjoy higher customer retention

rates and long-term customer relationships, ultimately leading to improved business performance. CSA acts as a mediator in the relationship between CRM and CLA (Fu & Ren, 2023). In essence, the satisfaction of customers with their experiences, which are shaped by CRM efforts, influences their loyalty. Highly satisfied customers are more likely to become loyal customers. They not only continue to do business with the company but also tend to recommend it to others, driving positive word-of-mouth.

CRM also includes mechanisms for gathering customer feedback and using it to refine products, services, and the overall customer experience. This iterative process contributes to higher satisfaction and, consequently, greater loyalty. CRM directly affect CSA, and in turn, satisfied customers are more likely to become loyal customers (Dandis, Wallace-Williams, et al., 2022). CSA mediates the influence of CRM on CLA, emphasizing the pivotal role of ensuring that customers are satisfied with their experiences to build long-term loyalty. Companies that prioritize CRM effectively can create a virtuous cycle where improved satisfaction drives greater loyalty, leading to business success and growth for hypothesis formulation.

H2: CRM is inferred to have significant impact on CLA
H3: CRM is inferred to have significant impact on CLA and also mediating CSA

Customer Bonding and Customer Satisfaction

Customer bonding is an element of business relationships between consumers and marketers who behave cooperatively to achieve their desired goals (Yi et al., 2021). Studies (Ojeme & Robson, 2020) consistently show that customers who have strong emotional bonds with a brand tend to be more satisfied. Emotional connections are created through positive experiences (Grayson, 2007), personalized interactions (Grayson, 2007; Rodríguez & Wilson, 2002), and a sense of belonging (Yim et al., 2008). These emotional ties contribute to higher levels of satisfaction. Trust plays a central role in both CBD and CSA. Research indicates that customers who perceive a high level of trust in a company are more satisfied with their interactions and experiences. Trust is built on reliability, consistency, and transparency.

Personalized interactions, a part of CBD that fortifies customer ties with a service framework built on reputable partnerships with service providers (Yim et al., 2008). Personalized interactions refer to the process of crafting distinctive and customized experiences for every single client. This can be accomplished by learning about the preferences, requirements, and behaviours of the consumer and then utilizing that knowledge to design a more tailored experience (Lowenstein, 2015). Customized communications, product recommendations, and customer service are just a few examples of the various ways that personalized interactions can be implemented (Grayson, 2007). Once companies tailor their products, services, and communications to individual customer preferences, it enhances the overall experience and leads to greater satisfaction. CBD often involves gathering customer feedback and using it to improve products and services. Research (Abror et al., 2019) suggests that companies that actively seek and act on customer

feedback tend to have more satisfied customers. The perception that their opinions are valued contributes to satisfaction.

CBD not only leads to higher CSA but also drives loyalty and advocacy. Satisfied, bonded customers are more likely to remain loyal to a brand and recommend it to others, further reinforcing the relationship between bonding and satisfaction (Malhotra et al., 2023). CBD efforts have been found to significantly reduce customer churn (the rate at which customers switch to competitors). Lower churn rates mean more satisfied customers who are less likely to explore alternatives (Yen et al., 2020).

Customers who feel emotionally connected to a brand are more likely to be satisfied with their overall experiences, leading to higher loyalty and repeat business. Some studies have highlighted the challenges in measuring CBD directly, but they acknowledge that CSA metrics can serve as a reliable proxy (Osman et al., 2022). High levels of satisfaction are often indicative of strong customer bonds (Kingshott et al., 2021), as for hypothesis formulation.
H4: CBD is inferred to have significant impact on CSA

Customer Bonding and Customer Loyalty

Studies (Abdur Rehman et al., 2019) consistently highlight that customers who have strong emotional bonds with a brand are more likely to exhibit high levels of loyalty. Emotional connections foster a sense of commitment and attachment that goes beyond mere satisfaction. Trust plays a pivotal role in both CBD and CLA. Research (Balci et al., 2019) indicates that trust in a brand or company is a critical factor in fostering loyalty. While customers trust that a brand will consistently meet their needs and provide reliable products or services, they are more likely to remain loyal.

While brands tailor their offerings and communications to individual customer preferences, it enhances the customer experience and reinforces loyalty (Sigala, 2018). CBD often include gathering customer feedback and using it to improve products and services. Research suggests that companies actively collecting and acting on customer feedback tend to enjoy more loyal customer bases.

CBD can be further strengthened through loyalty programs and rewards (Milan et al., 2018). Recent research (Adam et al., 2018) indicates that these programs, while well-designed and effectively implemented, can significantly enhance CLA. CBD efforts are effective in reducing customer churn rates. Customers who feel emotionally connected and loyal to a brand are less likely to switch to competitors, leading to greater customer retention.

Bonded and loyal customers are more likely to become advocates for a brand. They not only remain loyal themselves but also actively promote the brand to others, contributing to positive word-of-mouth and attracting new customers (Balci et al., 2019). Emotional engagement is a key driver of both CBD and CLA. Customers who feel emotionally engaged tend to be more satisfied with their overall experiences, further reinforcing their loyalty, for hypothesis formulation.

H5: CBD is inferred to have significant impact on CLA
H6: CBD is inferred to have significant impact on CLA and also mediating CSA

Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Studies consistently show that customers who have strong emotional bonds with a brand tend to be more satisfied. Emotional connections are created through positive experiences, personalized interactions, and a sense of belonging. These emotional ties contribute to higher levels of satisfaction. Trust plays a central role in both CBD and CSA. Research (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000) indicates that customers who perceive a high level of trust in a company are more satisfied with their interactions and experiences. Trust is built on reliability, consistency, and transparency. Personalization efforts, often a component of CBD, contribute to higher CSA. Once companies tailor their products, services, and communications to individual customer preferences, it enhances the overall experience and leads to greater satisfaction (Venkatakrishnan et al., 2023).

CBD often involves gathering customer feedback and using it to improve products and services. Research (Akgunduz et al., 2023) suggests that companies that actively seek and act on customer feedback tend to have more satisfied customers. The perception that their opinions are valued contributes to satisfaction. CBD not only leads to higher CSA but also drives loyalty and advocacy. Satisfied, bonded customers are more likely to remain loyal to a brand and recommend it to others, further reinforcing the relationship between bonding and satisfaction (Mainardes & Freitas, 2023).

CBD efforts have been found to significantly reduce customer churn (the rate at which customers switch to competitors). Lower churn rates mean more satisfied customers who are less likely to explore alternatives. Emotional engagement is a key driver of both CBD and CSA. Customers who feel emotionally connected to a brand are more likely to be satisfied with their overall experiences, leading to higher loyalty and repeat business. Some studies have highlighted the challenges in measuring CBD directly, but they acknowledge that CSA metrics can serve as a reliable proxy (Alzaydi, 2023; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). High levels of satisfaction are often indicative of strong customer bonds, as for the hypothesis
H7: CSA is inferred to have significant impact on CLA

One of the prominent theories that underpin this relationship is the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic) (Vargo & Lusch, 2018), which is an evolving perspective in the field of marketing (Gonçalves & Silva, 2021). S-D Logic focuses on the role of service and value co-creation in building lasting customer relationships (Skjølsvik, 2018). Service-Dominant Logic provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how CRM, customer bonding, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty are interconnected (Scarlett et al., 2021). It emphasizes the importance of relationships, customer-centricity, and value co-creation in modern marketing, highlighting the role of CRM in facilitating these principles. The following describes the conceptual framework of the relationship between variables.
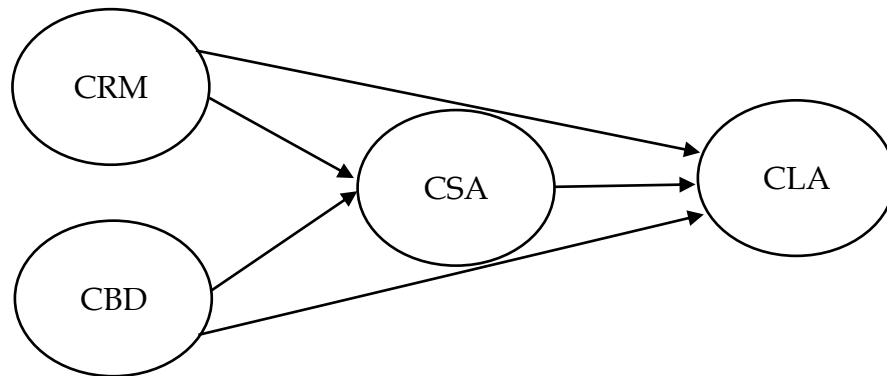
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts measurement with a 5-point Likert scale for all research indicators. First, the CRM measurement scale refers to the principles, practices and guidelines for marketers when interacting with consumers. CRM consists of key indicators customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM, all indicators adopted from (Dah et al., 2023). Second, the dimensions for CBD include advertising promotion, carrying out the recycling process, giving gifts (rewards), and support for an activity (Grayson, 2007; Yim et al., 2008). Third, CSA is measured based on overall experience, very satisfied, the shopping experience provided is above my expectations, and I am happy to buy (Matsuoka, 2022). Fourth, CLA is measured by repeat purchases (loyalty in purchasing products), retention (resistance to negative influences on the company), and referrals (totally refer to the existence of the company) (Ayodeji et al., 2023; Matsuoka, 2022).

The unit of analysis for this study was Makassar City residents who use telecom operators' services in order to meet the research's goals. The chosen respondents have utilized telecommunications services for a considerable amount of time—roughly five years—so they have enough practical knowledge to respond to questions about CRM, CBD, CSA, and CLA. Additionally, without influencing the study's findings, these respondents can offer unbiased evaluations that take into account patron loyalty.

Telkomsel is renowned for having a huge BTS population and a significant user base in comparison to other Indonesian providers. Indosat is the country's second-largest operator. Operators like Telkomsel and Indosat consistently offer quicker digital services and connectivity to promote economic expansion. The greatest economic hub in Eastern Indonesia is Makassar City, where the ratio of the Consumer Confidence Index has reached an optimistic level. Particularly in Makassar City, there is a growing demand for digital lifestyle activities, high-quality internet access, and BTS infrastructure support (Central Statistics Agency, 2022).

This study's target demographic consists of all Makassar City-based telecom users. An initial structured questionnaire was created and assessed in

order to make preliminary revisions based on the features of the telecoms sector, in order to gather data from a chosen group of respondents. The instrument was then tested after 36 clients were chosen to reply to the updated survey. Online and offline surveys were conducted after the new questionnaire underwent preliminary testing. Track the communities of the chosen respondents using the operators—Telkomsel and Indosat—on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and others. After the respondents were determined, an online poll was created and distributed to over 350 of their social media accounts. From September 2022 to January 2023, offline surveys were conducted at the branch offices of Telkomsel and Indosat.

This study uses a reflective measurement model because the latent variables of this model are considered as the main cause of the observed variables. For example, the latent constructs of CRM can lead to the formation of observable constructs such as key customer focus, CRM organization, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM. Covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) and variance-based structural equation modelling (VB-SEM) are the two main approaches to estimating multi-faceted relationships in structural equation models. In addition, the relative sample size of 230 observations is suitable for using PLS-SEM.

RESULTS

Measurement Model

Convergent validity measurement is done by comparing the outer loading value obtained by each measurement indicator to the variable it represents. Indicators that have outer loading values below 0.6 (Hair & Alamer, 2022) indicate that these indicators have weak explanatory power as in Table 1.

Table 1. Factor Loadings of the constructs

Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR	Alpha	VIF
CBD	CBD1	0.784	0.626	0.870	0.808	1.967
	CBD2	0.787				2.507
	CBD3	0.825				2.205
	CBD4	0.747				1.236
CLA	CLA1	0.819	0.715	0.882	0.800	1.585
	CLA2	0.887				1.743
	CLA3	0.727				1.341
CRM	CRM1	0.704	0.618	0.863	0.784	1.361
	CRM2	0.708				1.428
	CRM3	0.708				1.453
	CRM4	0.706				1.131
CSA	CSA1	0.844	0.737	0.894	0.822	1.655
	CSA2	0.854				1.931
	CSA3	0.846				1.720

Source: Adapted Smartpls 3 Output (2023)

After testing the validity of the construct, the next test is the construct reliability test which is measured by two criteria, namely Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) from the indicator block which measures the CR construct used to display good reliability (Hair & Alamer, 2022). A construct is declared reliable if the value of composite reliability or Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7. Table 1 shows that the results of the composite reliability test and Cronbach alpha show a value of > 0.6, which means that the value of each instrument is reliable. The formative construct is measured by collinearity indicators with a VIF score <10.

Table 2 is a discriminant validity measurement carried out to find out whether each measurement indicator included in the model has been assigned to the right variable. To find out whether each measurement instrument meets the requirements of discriminant validity, a cross loading measurement is carried out. Cross loading measurements are carried out by testing each instrument in the model for each variable in the same model. The last analysis stage in inferential statistical analysis is hypothesis testing as in Table 3.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

	CBD	CLA	CRM
CBD			
CLA	0.526		
CRM	0.474	0.544	
CSA	0.641	0.543	0.398

Source: Adapted Smartpls 3 Output (2023)

Table 3. Hypothesis Decisions for the Direct Effect Tests

	Effects	*t*-value	*p*-values	Decision
CBD → CLA	0.191	2.533	0.011	Accepted
CBD → CSA	0.519	10.504	0.000	Accepted
CRM → CLA	0.260	4.221	0.000	Accepted
CRM → CSA	0.123	2.380	0.017	Accepted
CSA → CLA	0.236	2.933	0.003	Accepted

Source: Adapted Smartpls 3 Output (2023)

The inferential statistics confirm all proposed hypotheses for the direct path of the model. This study presents the findings for the mediating effects as evident in Table 4, as well the presentation in Figure 2.

Table 4. T-statistics (indirect effects)

	Effects	*t*-value	*p*-values	Decision
CBD → CSA → CLA	0.123	2.639	0.008	Accepted
CRM → CSA → CLA	0.029	1.683	0.092	Rejected

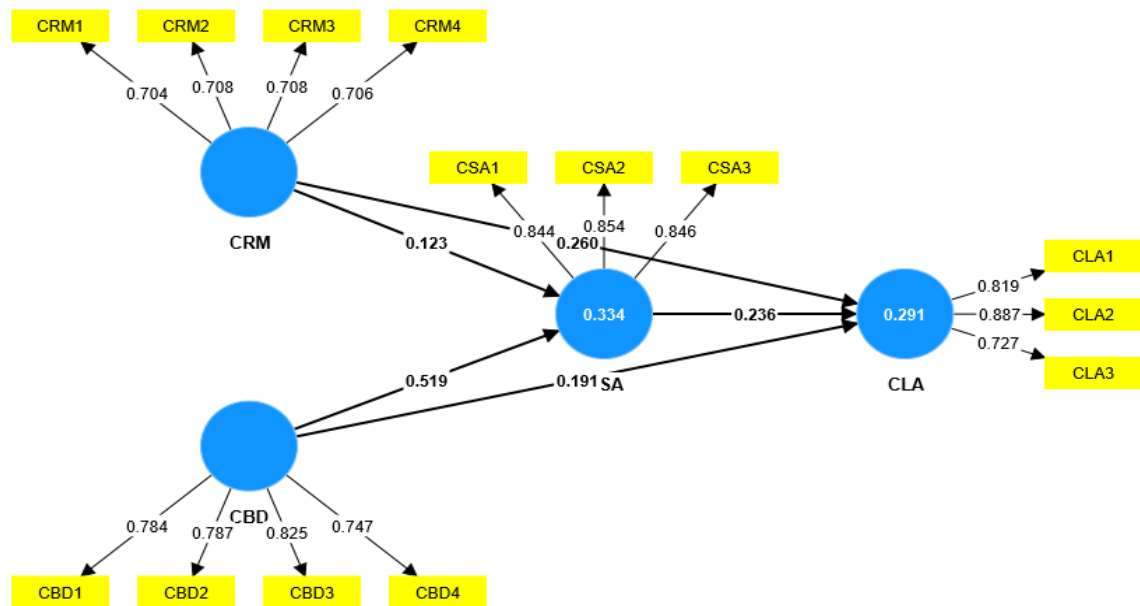Source: Adapted Smartpls 3 Output (2023)

Figure 2. PLS-SEM full model with path coefficient
Source: Smartpls 3 Output (2023)

DISCUSSION

CSA and CLA are significantly impacted by CRM (De et al., 2021), which implies the CRM enables companies to gather and analyse customer data, allowing them to tailor their products, services, and marketing efforts to individual customer preferences (Dandis et al., 2023). While customers receive personalized recommendations and offers that align with their needs and preferences, they are more likely to be satisfied (Sulaiman, 2018). CRM systems help companies provide more responsive and efficient customer service. Once customers can easily reach out for support, have their inquiries resolved promptly, and feel that their concerns are taken seriously, their satisfaction levels rise.

CRM mediates CSA and has a substantial effect on CLA, CRM systems facilitate the delivery of exceptional customer service. While customers receive responsive and helpful support, their CSA increases, leading to stronger CLA. CLA are often more forgiving of occasional issues if they know they can rely on efficient support. CRM enables companies to identify and address potential problems before they escalate.

It's vital to understand that, despite CRM's well-known ability to raise CLA, CSA is not a necessary mediator on CLA. CRM efforts notwithstanding, clients frequently transfer between carriers in the very competitive telecommunications business. Because of this, establishing a clear connection between CRM and customer loyalty through CSA mediation is challenging. Customers of today have high standards for exceptional service and tailored experiences. CRM can be thought of as a standard product, and increasing loyalty might not always follow from fulfilling these expectations. (El Moussaoui et al., 2023; Kittur & Chatterjee, 2021).

Strong CBD between businesses and their consumers increase the likelihood of high levels of CSA and CLA. This is because businesses may convey pertinent

messages, offers, and updates through the appropriate channels and at the appropriate times (Gilboa et al., 2019). If customers feel that a brand is trustworthy, they are more likely to be satisfied with their interactions and experiences. CBD often value the consistency and reliability that comes with a long-term relationship. Knowing what to expect from a brand and consistently receiving it contributes to higher satisfaction levels. CBD fosters open and effective communication. Customers who feel a strong bond with a brand are more likely to provide feedback and express their needs and concerns. This communication leads to better problem resolution and overall satisfaction.

CBD indirectly contributes to CLA through CSA, CBD is more likely to remain loyal, and CSA tend to become loyal customers. Once customers have positive experiences, they are more likely to stick with the same firm, make repeat purchases, and refer other people to the brand. In the context of the relationship between CBD and CLA, CSA acts as a mediating variable. It helps explain how the strong emotional connection and trust created by bonding contribute to loyalty through enhanced satisfaction.

FURTHER STUDY

Future studies can explore the role of CRM on CLA through CSA mediation by accommodating a mixed method approach to complement the results of statistical tests, presenting an accurate and in-depth conclusion-making process so that it can contribute to a deeper understanding of CRM and CBD on sustainable CSA and CLA.

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